



# Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks

EXHIBIT 2

DATE 1/23/07

NO 2

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Ref: DO038-07  
January 22, 2007

Representative Rick Ripley, Chairman  
Natural Resource & Conservation Subcommittee  
State Capitol Building  
Helena, MT 59620

Dear Chairman Ripley:

Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) has an ongoing program through Habitat Montana to work with landowners to identify opportunities to conserve priority wildlife habitat. This is often accomplished through conservation easements.

Conservation easements require annual monitoring and follow-up with the landowners to discuss monitoring findings and to address landowner inquiries and requests. This issue was discussed with the subcommittee last Friday (January 19, 2007) in relation to DP206. Following that discussion, the subcommittee requested a summary from FWP of proposed easement transactions for the 2009 biennium.

Attached is a list of easement transactions the Department anticipates completing during the 2009 biennium, as well as two projects that are in the planning stages. Additional opportunities may occur during the 2009 biennium.

Please contact me at 444-9817 if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Larry G. Peterman". The signature is fluid and stylized, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Larry G. Peterman  
FWP Chief of Field Operations

# CONSERVATION EASEMENTS

PROJECT	PURPOSE	STATUS
Williams Conservation Easement	Add to land conservation in the area, allow hunting opportunity, and continue livestock grazing.	432-acre easement. To be completed in early 2007.
Sun Ranch Conservation Easement	Acquire elk winter habitat in the Madison Valley, expand hunting opportunities, and develop a model of successful wildlife management and a working ranch.	Purchase easement on approximately 5,800 acres. The Nature Conservancy owns easement on 7,000 acres, and the US Forest Service is pursuing an easement on 5,800 acres of the property.
Coffee Creek Conservation Easement	This easement is primarily for the production of wild pheasants, and secondarily to the production of other wildlife. A further purpose is to provide hunting access.	In 2007, an easement on 800 acres is proposed. The easement will continue pheasant habitat development and maintenance. The easement also provides access to 1,200 acres of school trust lands.
Bird Creek Conservation Easement	Acquire an easement to conserve Missouri River riparian and adjacent upland habitat, improve wildlife diversity and productivity, develop hunting opportunities, protect farm and ranch land, and continue livestock grazing. This easement will be managed in conjunction with two USDA / Natural Resources Conservation Service easements.	In early 2007, acquire easement on 2,292 acres from a variety of funding sources including Habitat Montana, The Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program, the Wetland Reserve Program, PPL Montana, and the Montana Migratory Bird Stamp Program.
Springhill Ranch Easement	The ranch is located on the Rocky Mountain Front. The property is an important mule deer winter range for approximately 1,200 mule deer and 250-500 elk.	Project is in the planning stage. Conservation easements are being discussed.
Milk River Initiative	Conserve river riparian habitats along the Milk River with conservation easements. The objectives will be to conserve river bottom habitat, continue agricultural operations, allow hunting opportunities, and where possible, restore habitats such as cottonwood galleries.	Project is in the planning stage. FWP is seeking partners with similar interests to share costs.
Saypo Ranch Easement	These properties are located on the Rocky Mountain Front west of Choteau. Properties provide important winter range for big horn sheep, elk, antelope and mule deer, and bear corridors.	Project is in the planning stage. Conservation easements are being discussed.